October 20, 1936.

114 Yesterday after breakfast Mar took us to the place where he and his father were planting yams. We had made the arrangements the day before; Mar had said that it was not very far away, and so, despite the rain, we decided to go. [134] [133] What a trip! The soil here is largely made up of a sort of greasy mica which is the next thing to ice in slipperyness when it gets wet. Further, almost the entire journey was either up or down slopes varying from thirty to sixty degrees. Occasionally the tree roots provided some foothold, or in the steepest places little niches had been cut into the mud. Most of the time we were 'skating'. At least a dozen times my feet suddenly went out from under me and I fell. Tip was wearing leather boots and therefore did not fare so badly [488] as I with my tennis shoes. Mar, barefoot, padded along with a knee bending, heel and toe gait which allowed most of the surface of his splay feet to be on the ground at one time. He never seemed to slip. After about two and a half hours, we finally arrived at the 'bush house', soaked by rain and mud from without, and sweat from within.

126 While we were taking notes on the material culture we found there, Mar, 123 and Marok, who was already there when we arrived, cooked some yams for us. 262 They were boiled in a round bottomed pot made without kick. (These pots 252 are made by the coiling method and traded with the River people for shells.) [415] They also cooked a bird of paradise which Tip had shot on the way with the twenty- [323] two. It was placed on the fire, feathers and all. By the time it was done [439] the feathers had all burned off. The meat was then torn off and eaten. It [263] tasted excellent; the yams with some salt on them were good too. This salt [317] was some that we had given them, but they say that they have a salt mine in the mountains somewhere.

123 After our meal, Sof took us to his house. We stopped to smoke a cigarette and then expected to see some yam planting, but the natives said that unless

262
192 Soups and other foods

foyokw ndonkw (pork soup) - foyŋ (pork), mbonyŋ (taro), lofu (banana), mŋ@gisŋ (leaf greens), kow (yams), uku (water), mbir@kŋ (spinach) .

foyokw ndonkw-s@wŋ (pork and coconut soup) -kow (yams), foyŋ (pig meat), lofu (banana) mbir@kŋ (spinach), mŋ@gisŋ (leaf greens), s@wŋ (coconut).

wuaiyŋ m@os hunutu (thick vegetable soup) -hinyŋ (a kind of vegetable), mbir@kŋ (spinach), m@ngisŋ (leaf greens), owŋ (sago grubs), kwinyŋ (pork).

afow@wpŋ ndonku (cassowary soup) -mbir@kŋ (spinach), s@wŋ (coconut), m@ngisŋ (leaf greens), mbonyŋ (taro), lofu (banana).

[252] afondowan and all smaller birds are roasted, not made into soup.

[263] [439] Fish that is bought from Yambon at the market is already smoked and is merely salted and eaten with sago.

Preparation and cooking of yams

252 Yams are prepared for boiling by cutting off the skins with a cane knife. The yams are cut into chunks, the size of medium potatoes, and placed in a clay pot (about three quart size) to which water is added. They are boiled until they are soft, removed from the pot with yam sticks and [263] [192] placed on freshly picked banana leaves. A small amount of salt (wíg) is put on the leaf as well.

Salt (wíg)

263 192 [437] Salt is made by burning dried sago bark (punkú). The ashes are eaten. (It tastes like medicated salt.). Boat (pidgin) is trade salt, much preferred to the homemade variety.